

EDINBURGH, LOTHIAN and BORDERS BRANCH

(a charity registered in Scotland No: SC009110)

BRANCH VOLUNTEER POLICY

VOLUNTEER



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INTRODUCTION

The following policy applies to all individuals volunteering for this Branch of RAFA in a welfare, fundraising or general role; including Committee/Trustee & Lead/Support (non-trustee) roles.

This policy is very much based on the principles and related policies of the RAF Association and Branch Regulations. Relevant further information can be found on the RAFA Members Portal.

1. Recruitment and selection of volunteers

In order to ensure we attract volunteers from all backgrounds and that our volunteer pool reflects the communities and areas we provide services in, the Branch will ensure that there are no barriers to becoming a volunteer for the Branch. When recruiting and selecting volunteers, the Branch will take into account the principles as stated in the RAFA Diversity Policy and other relevant RAFA Policies; and the Branch will seek to recruit volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds that reflects the make-up of our local communities.

After initial contact by the branch, All volunteers will need to complete an application form (and in some cases a short CV, where required i.e. Committee/Trustees and Welfare roles). In addition, all prospective volunteers will be invited for interview by at least two of the standing Committee/Trustees of the Branch. This interview will be held at the convenience of the individual and will be designed to be as welcoming, informal and informative (for both parties) as possible.

Welfare volunteer roles will require volunteers to undergo a Disclosure 'Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act (PVGA)' clearance check and will be directed towards the Regional Welfare Manager.

Volunteers must be at least 18years of age to be eligible for Branch volunteering roles.

2. Induction and Training

Volunteers will receive all necessary training, support and an explanation of who we are, how we support the RAF family and information about the RAF (for those who have no prior knowledge). Training will cover all aspects of a volunteer's role and specific training for our welfare volunteers.

3. Health, Safety & Welfare

Will be managed in accordance with current health, safety & welfare regulations and as detailed in the branch H&S Policy.

4. Volunteer's Personal Data

Personal data will be managed by the branch in accordance with current UK GDPR regulations and as detailed in the branch's UK GDPR Policy.

5. RAFA Diversity Policy for Volunteers (extracts)

The RAF Association recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination.

6. RAFA Equality & Diversity Policy (extracts)

The Association is committed to ensuring within the framework of the law that our 'workplace' is free from unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of Disability, Colour, Race, Nationality, Ethnic or National Origin, Sex, Gender (including gender reassignment), Age, Marital Status, Religion, or other similar philosophical belief or non-belief.

The Association aims to ensure that our volunteers achieve their full potential and that all decisions are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. Volunteers are asked to abide by the rules outlined in the Diversity Policy for Volunteers.

7. RAFA Code of Code of Conduct for Volunteers (extracts)

The policy sets out the standards of behaviour that the Association expects from Volunteers and identifies the rights and responsibility of a volunteer. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a condition of a volunteer's involvement with RAFA and should be the standard all volunteers work to for all events and volunteering activities.

8. RAFA Complaints Policy & Procedures for Volunteers (extracts)

The Association is committed to ensuring that all volunteer activities are conducted in a fair and professional manner.

The Association believes that volunteering should be a positive experience for everyone, including Volunteers, Association staff and the beneficiaries they work with. In addition to protecting the reputation of the Association, we wish to protect Volunteer and Association staff, as well as minimise disruption to beneficiaries and other volunteering.

The Association defines a complaint as 'an expression of dissatisfaction, written (postal or email) or verbally (telephone or face to face) which requires investigation, action (if appropriate) and/or follow-up, verbally or in writing.'

The Association will handle each complaint raised in a fair, confidential (if possible) and professional manner, according to the rules laid out in the policy.

9. Expenses

Branch volunteers **may** be eligible to claim for necessary expenditure incurred for authorised volunteering directly from the branch. Reference should be made to the Branch Expense Policy. Any Expenses should be agreed by The Committee or Treasurer prior to any expenditure being incurred.

Committee roles require membership of the RAF Association as part of the Association's rules. In certain cases, branches, by mutual agreement, **may** offer to pay for your membership for the first year of membership. Thereafter it would be on an individual basis.

Each branch is a registered charity in its own right so each branch may have different expenses procedures.

Volunteers are encouraged to use public transport where possible; although it is appreciated that some activities a car will be essential and may be more cost effective.

It is unusual for branch volunteers to travel long journeys or out of the Branch territory. If a volunteer requires to travel by their own vehicle, they should first check with the Branch Treasurer that it is necessary to do so.

It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure their car is covered by appropriate tax, insurance and MOT documentation.

Volunteers should ensure that their car is covered for business use. This is the volunteers responsibility, insurance companies normally have no charge for this addition to existing or new insurance policies.

The branch does not cover expenses for Hospitality or Subsistence unless prior approval has been granted by the committee.

The branch does not cover expenses for Fines for Parking, Speeding or any other offences.

Any volunteer finding difficulty covering expenses up-front, should contact the Branch Treasurer.

Receipts and itemised bills will be required to support expenses claims.

An expense claim form can be obtained from the Branch Treasurer or the Annex below.

For more information on anything mentioned in this Branch Volunteer Policy, please ask a member of the Branch Committee.

NOTE:

Where reference is made to RAF Association Policy/Guidance & Branch Policies – further information/detail can be obtained by accessing the RAFA Members Portal or the Branch Website Governance Page

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

10. What is a Branch Volunteer?

An RAF Association Branch is a self-sufficient registered charity, that forms part of the Royal Air Forces Association. Through the work of branch members, the RAF Association is able to meet its charitable object of supporting the RAF family.

Branches are responsible to the Council (RAFA Trustees) and relevant Area Council.

A Branch Volunteer will help a Branch to meet its aims.

There are a number of roles which fall under the category 'Branch Volunteer'. These are:

Branch Officers • Chair • Vice-Chair • Secretary • Treasurer.

Other Branch Volunteer Roles • Wings Appeal Organiser • Branch Honorary Welfare Officer, Communications Officer, Webmaster, Facebook Admin, Air Cadet Liaison Officer (and other partnerships liaison), Social Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Membership Secretary (this list is not exhaustive).

NOTE:

It should be noted that even if specific roles are filled, the role leaders require and welcome additional support from branch volunteers.

11. Who can volunteer for a Branch?

Anyone is welcome to volunteer for a Branch volunteering role, however, membership of RAFA and the Branch is encouraged and welcomed. Some roles within the branch will require approval from the Committee or Branch Chair.

12. What are the responsibilities of a Branch Volunteer?

The President, Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (the officers of the branch) other Committee/Trustees all hold office for one year. The, Life Vice-President is not deemed to be an Officer of the Branch. Summaries of duties of the Committee Members are detailed below.

13. The role of the Branch President (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The Branch President is an elected NON- Trustee or Branch Committee member. They offer guidance and support to help implement policies issued by the Council (RAFA Trustees) and the Branch Management Committee (BMC). They may give views that help address any concerns of the Branch.

14. The role of the Branch Life Vice-Chairman (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The Branch Life Vice-Chairman is not elected and is not a Trustee or member of the Branch Committee. They can offer comment and guidance around policies issued by the Council (RAFA Trustees) and the Branch Management Committee (BMC)

15. The role of the Branch Chairman (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The Branch Chairman is the senior elected Trustee on the Branch Committee and should implement policies issued by the Council (RAFA Trustees) and the Branch Management Committee (BMC); but be prepared to represent the views and concerns of the Branch.

16. Duties of Branch Vice-Chair (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The role of a Branch Vice-Chair is to support the Branch Chairman in managing the Branch and may deputise for the Chairman as required.

17. Duties of Branch Secretary (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The Branch Secretary has a very important position in that they are responsible to the Branch Chairman and Committee for the efficient management of the Branch administration (including organising Trustee and General Branch meetings on a regular basis, to organise AGM's and SGM's and to liaise with the Area, BMC and CHQ regularly....And to handle all vital documents pertaining to the Branch and control all aspects of the governance of the Branch).

18. Duties of Branch Treasurer (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The role of the Branch Treasurer is to administer the financial management of the Branch, ensuring the Chairman and Trustees are always aware of the financial state of the branch.

19. Duties of Branch Welfare Officer (extracts from Branch Regulations)

Every Branch is required to appoint a Branch Welfare Officer (BWO); the BWO exercises the responsibilities for welfare within the Branch.

All new BWO's and ABWO's must undertake the Association's volunteer welfare training to ensure that safeguarding risks are managed, that the minimum requirements of new BWO/ABWO are met and that volunteers/members are clear about what is expected of them in their role and activities.

20. Duties of Branch Wings Appeal Organiser (extracts from Branch Regulations)

The RAFA Wings Appeal, which provides a large part of the Association's benevolent income, depends on the involvement of Branches and Volunteers. The Charter requires Branches to give active support to the organisation of the Wings Appeal. It is, however, a year-round activity and is not confined to Battle of Britain Week in September; and Branches should attempt to raise funds throughout the year.

Comprehensive instructions on the organisation of the Wings Appeal are contained in the 'Wings Appeal Guide to Organisers'. This document outlines Branch responsibilities for fundraising. The HQ Community Fundraising Team offer guidance and assistance to Branches.

At the first Trustee meeting after the AGM a 'Branch Fundraising Sub-Committee' may be created (under the leadership of a Wings/Fundraising Organiser).

21. What is the desired outcome of this volunteer role?

The RAF Association is a member-led, welfare charity that exists to ensure that all members of the RAF family are supported, when they require it. A Branch Volunteer's role is at the heart of this charity objective and volunteers undertaking this role will be helping us to deliver this support to the RAF family.

22. Who do Branch Volunteers report to?

Currently, Branch Volunteers report to the Members of the Committee of their Branch.

23. Who are members of the RAF family?

Currently, anyone serving or has served in the RAF, Regular or Reserve, their respective partner, spouse and/or dependent children may be beneficiaries. Parents and close relatives by blood or marriage/civilian registration, who's lives are directly affected by a family member who is serving in the RAF, Contractors and Civil Servants supporting the RAF as well as the RAF Air Cadet Organisation - are all part of the extended RAF family.

24. How does it work?

Volunteers may indicate to a Branch directly that they wish to volunteer for a particular role, or volunteer in general terms pending further experience. Volunteers will need to be approved by the Committee Members of the Branch and will then be given appropriate training, information and an induction, in order to undertake the role.

25. What qualifications, skills or experience do I need to be a Branch Volunteer?

Branch Volunteers will need to have a variety of skills, depending on their role. These could include: • Communication and listening skills (particularly for Branch Chair, Vicechair and Secretary) • Maths or accounting skills (particularly for Branch Treasurer) • IT skills (particularly for Branch Treasurer and Secretary etc.) • Relationship building skills (all roles and particularly welfare roles) • Organisational skills and money handling (particularly Wings Appeal Officer role) Volunteers should be able to work confidentially (where required); and in a non-judgemental manner.

26. What training will be given?

The Branch will be responsible for any training needs your role entails. If you volunteer you will be put forward to receive accredited training run by the RAF Association Welfare Training Manager. Branch Volunteers should feel confident and prepared after receiving training, however, volunteers are not obliged to do anything they are uncomfortable doing, so please let the Branch Chair know of any concerns you may have about your role.

27. What is the time commitment?

The time commitment of a Branch Volunteer will vary according to the activities of the Branch. Please speak to the Branch Chair or point of contact for more information on the time commitment involved. The branch and the RAF Association is grateful for whatever time you are able to give and will endeavour to find a role to suit you.

28. What skills will I develop?

Branch Volunteers can develop a wide variety of skills, including: • Listening and communication skills • IT skills • Report writing skills • Building relationships with a wide variety of people • Team working skills

29. COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERS

The Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch fully supports the RAF Association's 'Commitment to Volunteers' statement:

“The Association is committed to working with and supporting volunteers throughout its varied work to support the RAF Family. A volunteer's donation of time is so important to us and our volunteers are highly valued”.

30. Appendix A. - Initial Volunteer Contact Form



BRANCH INITIAL
CONTACT FORM

31. Appendix B.- Volunteer Further Information Form



BRANCH
RECRUITMENT FURT

32. Appendix C.- Committee/Trustee Welfare roles CV (to be developed)

33. Appendix D.- Volunteer Initial Contact – Contactor Guidance



VOLUNTEER INITIAL CONTACT

34. Appendix E. - Branch Expenses Policy



Branch Expenses Policy

35. Appendix F. - Branch Expenses Claim Form



EL&B Expense Claim Form

36. Record of Ongoing Reviews

VERSION	DATE	ACTION	REASON	PERSON
Draft	April 2021	Draft		Bob Bertram Branch President
1.0	April 2021	Publish		Dave Prior Branch Treasurer
1.1	April 2021	Wording amendments	Annex B +E amendments	Dave Prior Branch Treasurer
1.2	Jan 2022	Review	Review	Dave Prior Branch Treasurer